it works in this instance. Even his occasional humorous side comments are perfectly suitable. I do, however, have concerns about this book; I take issue with some of the facts presented by Scott. For example, he suggests that threshing machines were not used until 1878 whereas they were already being shown at country fairs in Upper Canada in the 1850s. Second, the point of the Winnipeg Tractor Trials was to pit the established steam traction engine against the newcomer kerosene and, despite his assertion otherwise, archival records show both were demonstrated at 1908's inaugural event. Third, given its pivotal role in Canadian agricultural development, most historians of cereal crop breeding would accord Marquis wheat much more stature than simply being "an offshoot of Red Fife." Fourth, although Scott touches upon the popularity among urbanites of automobile demolition derbies, such as that shown in the foreground of an image taken at the Brandon Fair, he fails to mention the preparations underway in the background for the "combine crunch" that was equally important to many farmers.

Having said that, Scott's book should appeal equally to historians of material history and to those wishing to use it as a reminder of their youthful excursions to the local country fair. Should the day come when country fairs no longer exist, *Country Fairs in Canada* will provide future generations with an understanding of what they have missed.

S. HOLYCK HUNCHUCK

Review of
Calloway, Stephen, Elizabeth Cromley et al. 2005. *The Elements of Style: An Encyclopaedia of Domestic Architectural Detail*, 3rd ed. Revised and updated by Alan Powers. Richmond Hill: Firefly Books.

Pp. 592, illus., index, bibliography, glossary, biographies of designers, restoration and maintenance guide and lists of suppliers. Cloth $75.00, ISBN 1-55407-079-1.

The *Elements of Style* is described on its inside flyleaf as "the most comprehensive visual survey of architectural styles ever produced," but these claims are exaggerated. The book was first published in a smaller version in 1991 by Octopus in the United Kingdom, and by Simon and Schuster in the USA with the more accurate subtitle, "A Practical Encyclopaedia of Interior Architectural Details of 1485 to the Present." Stephen Calloway, curator of Prints and Books at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and general editor of this third, 2005 edition under the Canadian imprint Firefly, narrows the field even further by noting that it is a "sourcebook for those who care about our heritage of architecture in Britain and the United States" (9). Within its limitations of geography, chronology and subject matter, *The Elements of Style* is an exhaustive large-format visual dictionary of architectural details from the history of British housing of the past 500 years, with reference to some American examples. However, in part it still reads as a work-in-progress.

Thirteen authors have contributed to *The Elements of Style*. Its seventeen main chapters are arranged in roughly chronological order and are organized by architectural style, feature by feature, according to a simple template: a dense, two-page textual summary of a given architectural style is followed by a visual breakdown of its details by component. The narrative begins with the chapter "Tudor and Jacobean, 1485 to 1625," by Simon Thurley, a British architectural historian and chief executive of English Heritage, and concludes with three chapters that discuss the 20th century: "The Modern Movement (1920-1950)," "Beyond Modern (1950-1975)" and "Contemporary Era (1975-present day)," all by Alan Powers. He is Senior Lecturer at the University of Greenwich School of Architecture and Landscape, London, co-editor of *The Elements* and a particularly thoughtful writer. As with *The Twentieth Century House in Britain: From the Archives of Country Life* (2004), Powers's chapters are dense but highly-readable discussions of one of the most complex eras in architectural history. Also included in this lengthy volume are separate chapters on British and American vernacular architectures, a glossary of architectural terms and biographies of architects, designers and illustrators, as well as practical guidelines for proper restoration techniques and lists of suppliers of building parts in the U.K. and North America.

The overarching theme that emerges from this book is that visual literacy is the basis for architectural literacy. In this linguistic model, the built environment constitutes a visual language in which the parts of a building comprise the "vocabulary" of an architectural style, while "grammar" consists of the arrangement of the parts. While this visual-linguistic approach to architectural literacy is a familiar one to art historians, it may be a new proposition for the generalist. The editors, however, have ensured that even the novice to the field of architectural history will be convinced of the merits, as supported by the book's superb production standards. It is a beautifully-designed volume and the uncounted thousands of illustrations that form its bulk are almost uniformly excellent. The colour plates in particular are of extremely high quality. The composition, depth of focus and colour saturation found in such images as the stairwell detail in the London house of English Neo-Classical architect John Soane (1753-1837) on page 186, for example, remind the reader of the sheer pleasure to be derived from the act of carefully looking at some of the most ordinary objects. Such plates are found throughout the book, in addition to black-and-white photographs and line drawings.

The ensemble of illustrations seem to cover every conceivable aspect of a British or American house, with the result that each main chapter contains a dizzying amount of visual detail, albeit arranged in a clear and consistent manner. Colour-coded, tabbed entries make it convenient for the reader to cross-reference major building components from various periods and styles. Walls, ceilings, windows, doors and "services" (that is, toilets, drains, stoves and washbasins) are all documented here, as well as the minutiae of building construction, such as door pulls, light fixtures, window hardware, fireplaces and plasterwork. This organizational system adds to the reader's ability to recognize the forms of architectural style via its details, but the result is more than aesthetically pleasing: it illustrates a chronology of material change, it allows for the making of informed choices about sensitive restoration of old fabric and provides a guide for appropriate new design. The use of a half-colour plate combined with a half-line drawing is a particularly useful analytical device. The illustration of the front door of Red House, Bexleyheath (1859) (built by architect Philip Webb (1831-1915) for William Morris (1834-96), English designer and writer, for example, tells much about the Arts and Crafts movement in a single image (308).

Nevertheless, the reader is left uneasy at times. As is to be expected from a collection of essays by so many authors, the quality of contributions is uneven from author to author and chapter to chapter. The contributors, eleven British and two American, include a cross-section of professionals in the fields of architectural history, teaching, practice and exhibition in the U.K. and the U.S., but the written text does not always do credit to the quality of visual imagery. Among the authors are four members of English Heritage, an agency of the British government dedicated to research into, and touristic promotion of, historic buildings and sites in that country. While this may explain the preponderance of British examples in the book, there is no explicit rationale provided for these cultural and geographic choices, nor for the time frame chosen. For North American readers, the Tudor starting point of this history coincides with the earliest of British colonial influence on this continent, but the editors should explain these and other editorial decisions. The complete absence from the book of Canadian houses—or those from other British Commonwealth countries—whose architectures have been as deeply influenced by British examples as has been the domestic architectures of the United States, for example, are perhaps the most glaring omissions. For example, William J. Macintire, the Historic Sites coordinator for the Kentucky Heritage Council contributes to the "Colonial (1607-1708)" chapter, but it references only American houses.

Nevertheless, this book is more than a technical manual for building restoration. Art historical writing of the strongest order can be found in several chapters. In addition to Powers's very good contributions, other chapters that deserve careful reading and re-reading include Calloway's "Early Georgian (1714-1765)." This style was derived largely from the ideas of Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), particularly his *Four Books of Architecture* of 1570. The chapter describes the influence of Palladio's and other architectural pattern books and builders' manuals on English building construction, explains the significance of new by-laws after the catastrophic fire of London in 1666 and notes the impact of changing building materials such as the creation of brighter paints during this period. A similarly cogent history is found in "Arts and Crafts, 1860-1925," a chapter by the late Stephen Jones, a British art historian. In a virtuoso display of scholarship, Jones manages to delineate the path between the medieval vernacular forms espoused by the English art critic John Ruskin

(1819-1900) and the dramatic modernity of the "greatest American architect of the 20th century" Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959) (307), via such disparate figures as Morris, the American firm McKim, Mead, and White (founded 1879), the British architect Sir Edward Lutyens (1869-1944) and a dozen other notable individuals, all while providing context by reference to allied art movements such as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. He does so in a two pages of clear and elegant prose.

However, the unevenness of some of the writing is most evident by comparing "British Vernacular," by medievalist and Professor Emeritus of Architectural History at Greenwich University Anthony Quiney, with "American Vernacular," by Elizabeth Cromley, Professor of Architecture at Boston's Northeastern University. While Quiney notes that the term "vernacular" "embraces a bewildering array of different styles" (526), his examples are drawn from a rather limited definition of the term. The chapter is dedicated almost exclusively to variations on the stereotypical thatched-roof cottage of the English countryside in the Middle Ages and it ends with the coming of the Industrial Revolution, ca.1800. By contrast, Cromley's chapter is more inclusive; it begins with the 16th century, explores the changes wrought by industrialization in the 19th century and recognizes the contributions of various ethnic groups. Cromley, like Powers, is a writer whose other works are well worth reading, including her *Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments* (1990) and the two volumes of the journal of the American Vernacular Architecture Forum's *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* that she guest-edited in 1994 and 1995 for the University of Tennessee. In *The Elements*, she defines vernacular architecture in a way that is more useful and memorable than is Quiney's. She notes it is a

> much-disputed [term], and in the United States is best understood to embrace a number of different types of architecture: buildings produced for lower budgets than those in the high style, and therefore exhibiting notable ethnic and regional differences; buildings made by traditional methods for rural and provincial clients; and buildings in which ethnic and regional traditions merge with current styles to create interesting hybrids. In the vernacular house there is likely to be a mix: some new ideas, some tradition. (536)

Despite these two chapters dedicated to vernacular architectures, the overall emphasis of *The Elements* is on the high styles produced by name architects for wealthy clients. While occasional references are made to the differences between the ways the rich and the poor live, little consideration is given to issues of class as manifest in the forms and materials of housing. In a more thorough study, each chapter would pick up on such themes as that explored in the "Lighting" entry in Calloway's "Early Georgian" chapter. In it, he points out that the quality of light in an interior domestic space in mid-18th-century England was determined by social stratum: large windows and relatively clean-burning beeswax candles were available in the rooms occupied by the manor-born, while their tenants and servants had to make do with small windows (or no windows at all) and dirty-burning candles made of tallow, that is, animal fat (103). Even within its largely British context, *The Elements of Style* could use a chapter that focuses on the dilemma of housing for the poor, discussing for example vernacular architecture after 1800, the company housing and urban tenements of the early Industrial Revolution, the housing estates (social housing) of the post-World War II era and the rise and fall and rise again of shelters for the homeless.

A fourth edition of *The Elements of Style* would be further enhanced by additional contributions by Powers and Cromley and Canadianists would appreciate the inclusion by Firefly of some Canadian content. Much solid research on domestic architecture in this country has been done by academics as well as researchers in the federal government's Department of Heritage and the Province of Alberta's Ministry of Culture and Multiculturalism, to name a few. Titles in this field range from such published surveys as Peter Ennals and Deryck Holdsworth's *Homeplace: The Making of the Canadian Dwelling over Three Centuries* (1998), through stylistic studies such as Leslie Maitland's *Queen Anne Revival Style in Canada* and Natalie Clerk's *Palladian Style in Canadian Architecture* (both 1984), to numerous unpublished but publicly available studies and heritage reports created by government bodies and community groups.

Ideally, future editions of *The Elements of Style* would also have dedicated chapters on emerging and increasingly important aspects of domestic architecture, such as Green design (environmentally-conscious planning, a movement that is much larger in the U.K. than in Canada and from which Canadians could learn much), design for handicapped accessibility and the problems of building conservation in extreme climates.

Additionally, while the biographies in the 2005 edition describe a diverse cross-section of influential figures, from the romantic British Victorian illustrator Walter Crane (1845-1915) to such titans of European high style Modernism as Germany's Peter Behrens (1869-1940) and Marcel Breuer (1902-1982), this chapter could be expanded by Firefly in its Canadian edition to include Canadian individuals and institutions who have made distinctive contributions to housing in this country, such as architect Arthur Erickson (1924b), the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation or the B.C. Mills lumber company.

Minor corrections and clarifications would also be needed in the next edition. For example, did the editors really mean to state that the Richardsonian Romanesque style (after 19th-century American architect and medievalist H. H. Richardson (1836-86)) was *not* a revival style, as they seem to do (560)? Similarly, on page 543 in the copy of *The Elements* provided to *Material Culture Review*, errors in the layout of this otherwise beautiful book have rendered the text indecipherable.

At $75, most Canadian readers and collecting institutions might want to wait for the next edition of *The Elements of Style*, when at least a few Canadian references could be added and the necessary corrections and clarifications made.